

Claims:

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

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1. A system for communication of a proposed commercial transaction in a local area comprising:

a mobile wireless device associated with a consumer, the mobile wireless device including a storage for receiving and storing information related to consumer preferences and an antenna for communicating with local merchants in the local area; and

a communications system adapted to communicate with the mobile wireless device associated with a consumer within the local area, said communications system coupled to receive information from a merchant of a proposed offer and for transmitting the proposed offer to the mobile wireless device associated with the consumer.

2. A system for communication of a proposed commercial transaction in the local area including the elements of Claim 1 and further including a storage of an offer from a first merchant and the transmission of information relating to that offer to a second merchant, whereby the second merchant can make the consumer an offer better than the offer made by the first merchant.

3. A system for communication of a proposed commercial transaction in the local area including the elements of Claim 1 wherein the mobile wireless device associated with the consumer is a cellular telephone with storage including preferences loaded by the consumer and the communications system is a short range wireless system operating over a limited local area.

4. A system for communication of a proposed commercial transaction in the local area including the elements of Claim 3 wherein the short range wireless communication system complies with the Bluetooth specification.

5. A system for communication of a proposed commercial transaction in the local area including the elements of Claim 1 wherein the offer communicated to the consumer matches the consumer preferences stored in the mobile wireless device.

6. A system of the type described in Claim 1 wherein the offer made by the merchant is based on the preferences stored by the consumer into the mobile wireless device but differs from the consumer preferences stored in the mobile wireless device.

7. A method of proposing commerce between a fixed merchant and a potential consumer carrying a mobile wireless device while the potential consumer is located proximate to the merchant but not necessarily in the presence of the merchant, the steps of the method comprising:

- determining that a potential consumer is located proximate to the fixed merchant;
- communicating with the mobile wireless device carried by the consumer to read a list of preferences stored in the mobile wireless device;
- communicating the presence of the potential consumer in the proximate location and those preferences stored in the mobile wireless device to at least one merchant located proximate to the potential consumer; and
- receiving a proposed transaction from the at least one merchant and communicating the proposed transaction to the mobile wireless device associated with the potential consumer.

8. A method for proposing commercial transactions including the steps of Claim 7 wherein the method additionally includes the steps of:

receiving a consumer input based on the proposed transaction and transmitting a message to the merchant; and

receiving a reply from the merchant based on the consumer input and transmitting the reply to the consumer.

7 9. A system for conducting an auction between two merchants each having a fixed location and a consumer located proximate to the two merchants, the consumer carrying a mobile wireless device with stored information about the consumer's preferences relating to a proposed transaction, the system comprising:

a mobile wireless device associated with a consumer for storing details of a proposed transaction and for receiving messages from at least a first merchant and a second merchant related to a proposed transaction;

a comparator for comparing the messages from the first merchant and the second merchant to determine which message offers the better deal; and

a transmission system for sending at least one merchant the details of the better deal and for receiving a message from at least one merchant in response to the details of the better deal.

8 10. A system for conducting an auction including the elements of Claim 7 and further including a system for comparing the received message from the merchant in response to the details of the better deal and for communicating that received message to another merchant.

11. A program stored on a storage medium adapted to be read by an information handling system, the program comprising:

a module for identifying a potential consumer located within a local area of a merchant and carrying a mobile wireless device including storage with consumer preferences;

a module for interrogating the mobile wireless device carried by the potential consumer for the stored consumer preferences and for receiving a transmission of those stored consumer preferences;

a module for determining whether the merchant offers a product which would be of interest to the consumer; and

if the merchant has one or more offering which are suitable for the stored preferences of the consumer, a module for providing an offer to the consumer, including a module for formatting and transmitting a message to the mobile wireless device.

12. A program including the elements of Claim 11 wherein the module for identifying the potential consumer includes a system for locating the potential consumer when he is within the approximate area of a shopping mall in which the merchant is located.

13. A program including the elements of Claim 11 and further including a module for receiving a subsequent communication from the communications device about the proposed transaction and for providing a reply to the consumer through a subsequent communication with the mobile wireless device.

9/14. A program stored on a storage medium adapted to be read by an information handling system, the program comprising:

a first module for storing consumer preferences;

a second module for transmitting consumer preferences in response to an interrogation by an external system;

a third module for receiving bids from the external system and for storing those bids;

a fourth module for comparing bids to determine the best bid and for sending the best bid to other bidders; and

a fifth module for displaying the best bid received so that the consumer can acknowledge the bid.

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